ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED002699	N.A.	N.A.	

4. AUTHOR(S): Haller, Archibald O.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Educational and Occupational Choices of Farm Youth

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan
ST.
CITY, STATE
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: National Committee for Children and Youth, 1145 Nineteenth St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	9/63	15

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE: YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED: YES ☐ NO ☒

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED: YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: Report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

farm youth	occupational choices			
rural youth	counseling			
aspirations	achievement			
	educational choices			

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Educational and occupational alternatives open to farm boys and girls, the factors influencing their job choice, the effects of their choices on their job performance, and ways of improving their choices are discussed. Information is based on pertinent literature in the field.

The organization of the occupational structure is such that the more complex jobs require more preparation, allow greater contributions to society, and are more rewarding financially. The schools tend to train people to hold positions in this structure. The lower positions are disappearing, and more jobs are opening up on higher levels. Most farm youth have to work within this system, and those who are poorly educated, but do not farm, usually enter the lowest level jobs. Farming does not automatically provide an escape from the situation because the educational requirements for success are the same as non-farming requirements.

The plan to be a farmer is the main determinant of the low nonfarm achievement level of farm-reared boys. Those planning to be farmers have lower educational and occupational goals than do others. Many low achievers are persons who have planned to farm but have failed to prepare for nonfarm work. Not enough farms are available for boys who plan to farm.

Promising ways to equalize the occupational achievement levels of farm and nonfarm youth involve working with the farm boy's plan regarding farming. School counseling makes boys less sure of being farmers and makes them more attentive to nonfarm work requirements. Procedures to make farm youth more effective in nonfarm work will also make them better farmers if they finally choose that vocation.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

ED002699

EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES OF FARM YOUTH

by

Archibald O. Haller
Michigan State University

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH
1145 Nineteenth Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

THE CENTER FOR CULTURAL STUDIES
Adams State College of Colorado
Alamosa

J0548

EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES OF FARM YOUTH

by

Archibald O. Haller
Michigan State University

Prepared for

The National Conference on Problems of Rural Youth
in a Changing Environment

September 1963

ED002699

EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES OF FARM YOUTH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

page

Abstract. 1

Introduction. 2
- Occupational and Educational Alternatives. 2
- The Nonfarm Occupational Achievement of Farm-Reared People 3

The Nonfarm Occupational Achievement Process of Farm-Reared Boys. 4
- Planning to Farm 5
- The Effects of Planning to Farm. 6
- Aspiration and Achievement 8
- Summary. 8

Farm Girls. 8

Boys Who Enter Farming. 9

Implications. 10
- Needed Research Implications 10
- Conclusions for Policy 10

Conclusion. 12

EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES OF FARM YOUTH

by

Archibald O. Haller
Michigan State University

ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with the educational and occupational alternatives available to farm boys and girls, the factors which lead them to select some and ignore others, the effects of their choices on their performance in occupations, and various ways of improving their choices. The educational and occupational alternatives are presented by an urban-industrial occupational world. That is, the occupational structure is hierarchically organized, with the more complex occupations being the more rewarding, permitting the greater contribution per person to the society, and requiring the greater degree of preparation. Among other things, the educational system functions to train and select persons to fill positions in this structure. Moreover, for various reasons, the lower positions on the structure are tending to disappear while new positions are opening up at the higher levels. The majority of farm-reared youth must make their way in this system. Hence, farm-reared youth who fail to become at least fairly well educated, but who do not farm, are likely to enter the lower levels of the occupational structure, limiting both their own rewards and their contribution to society; their jobs, too, are not very secure. It should not be concluded that farming provides an escape from this: it seems a fair guess that the noneconomic requirements for success in farming, especially level of educational attainment, are the same as those outside of it.

The main determinant of the low nonfarm achievement levels of farm-reared boys seems to be a plan to be a farmer. Boys who plan to farm have much lower levels of educational and occupational aspiration than do others. We know, too, that levels of educational and occupational achievement are highly correlated with levels of aspirations. Thus, many of the low achievers are doubtless persons who planned to farm and failed to prepare for nonfarm work. Unfortunately there appear to be many more boys who plan to farm than there are farms available for them. There is also, in some areas of the country, an influence of geographical isolation which affects both boys and girls: the greater the distance from urban-industrial centers, the lower the levels of educational and occupational aspiration and achievement. But this latter influence is evidentally lower than that of the plan to farm.

There are several ways to equalize the occupational achievement levels of farm and nonfarm youth. The most promising are various ways to work with the farm boy's plan regarding farming. Of these, the most effective would probably be to use school counseling procedures to make the boys less certain that they will be farmers. There is reason to expect that they will then be more attentive to nonfarm work requirements. Reducing the effects of geographical isolation will probably affect all boys and girls in distant areas, but since this influence is not very great, the overall impact will not be great. Unfortunately, policies producing a rise in farm income and a decrease in the number of farms may well increase the number of boys who plan to farm. If such policies continue, and if steps are not taken to reduce the deleterious effects of planning to farm, it may be that the "achievement gap" between farm and nonfarm boys may widen. In any case, policies tending to make farm youth more effective in nonfarm work will very likely tend to make them better farmers.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with the causes and consequences of variations in educational and occupational choices of farm youth, viewed from a sociological perspective. That is, such choices are seen as a process of selection among alternatives. The process usually begins early in life, and for our purposes, ends only when the person becomes stabilized in a regular occupation. We are concerned with the alternatives available to farm youth, the factors that lead them to select some and ignore others, and the effects of their choices on their performance in occupations.

Data on career patterns of farm-reared girls are practically non-existent, and data on the success of boys who stay in farming are quite scarce. But the vast majority of farm boys will enter non-farm jobs. Partly for this reason, data on the nonfarm occupational achievement process of farm-reared boys are more readily available. In addition, this group evidently has the most serious problems. For these reasons the major part of the paper will be devoted to boys who leave farming.

The data used are taken from many sources. Usually, these report only on a few limited aspects of the total process. Yet together they seem to form an intelligible picture, even if the total process is inferred from scattered evidence. Ideally one would like to have information on the same individuals and their social contexts, taken over a long time period, in a manner which permits ready generalization to the population of American farm youth as a whole. This ideal is impossible to meet because it would require waiting twenty or twenty-five years for the sample members to grow up. Moreover, because the occupational and educational structure of the nation is changing, such studies still would permit only educated guesses as to the exact form of the process as it is now being worked out in the life of the youth of today.

OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES.

The fundamental alternatives among which, either by intent or default, the youth is forced to choose are presented by a primarily urban-industrial occupational world. Indeed we interpret the educational system, first, as a mechanism for training the young to perform more or less well in a complex, interdependent and highly organized occupational system which is itself primarily an urban phenomenon, and second, to be able to live peaceably in close proximity to others; again an urban phenomenon.

But it is not our intent to concentrate on the meaning of education. It is enough to point out that occupations are ranked,[1] and that education is the major social mechanism for distributing persons into the various levels of the occupational order. Hence, the young person's performance in the educational system highly influences his level of achievement in the occupational system: with a few individual exceptions, there is a high correlation between the number of years of school completed and the prestige level of occupational achievement.

Yet, there are important changes going on in the occupational structure and in its relationship to the educational system. We must take some of these changes into account if our planning for rural youth is to be realistic. Each year new occupations emerge and old ones disappear. Also, occupations change; new duties are developed and old ones are eliminated. Then too, most of the occupations which are coming into being are more exacting and complex than are those which are going out of existence. Similarly, the new duties being added to old occupations tend to be more complex than were the discarded ones. As a result the demand is increasing for highly trained workers, while it is decreasing for poorly trained workers. Since practically all of the basic tasks of preparing people to perform well in complex occupations---developing numerical, logical, and literary skills, as well as training people to be good leaders, followers, and co-workers---falls upon the schools, it seems certain that the ties between the educational system and occupational structure will become even closer than they have been. Youth of today must anticipate the effects of these changes so as to prepare themselves for tomorrow.

Practically all of the boys who enter farming come from farm backgrounds, yet only a small fraction of those who were born on farms can expect to become farmers. One generally accepted estimate is that about 10 percent of boys living on farms can expect to become commercial farm operators. This is because practically all the available land has been taken over, because farms are becoming fewer in number and larger in size, and because the number of boys reared on farms far exceeds the number of farms which become available. For these and other reasons, a large proportion of the farm-reared boys decide that they will go directly into nonfarm occupations. Even so, the number of boys who plan to farm exceeds by a large amount the number of farms available to them.

Then too, few women become farm operators; practically all farm-reared girls either enter nonfarm work or leave the labor force.

Thus, the great majority of farm youth who will enter the labor force, now and for the foreseeable future, will find themselves in nonfarm jobs. The quality of the jobs each youth enters, and his ability to make a success of them, is dependent largely on the amount and quality of education he receives.

Farm people tend on the average to believe that education is not as important for those who plan to farm as it is for those who do not. Some argue that education is not very important for those entering farming. But performing effectively in a highly competitive agricultural market probably depends on the same sets of high-level abilities that are required for competence in the nonfarm world.[2] It follows that education is probably closely tied to effective performance in farming just as it is in other occupations. Doubtless, these ties will become stronger as time goes on.

THE NONFARM OCCUPATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF FARM-REARED PEOPLE.

Most of the numerous studies on the nonfarm occupational success of farm

people concern males. Yet the available reports indicate that to a lesser degree the conclusions also apply to females.[3] They all show that people who were reared on farms are much less likely to be successful than are those reared in cities.[4] The most comprehensive of these, by Freedman and Freeman in 1952, for example, shows that the farm-reared people in urban areas are more highly concentrated in the manual labor jobs, and much less in the professional and semi-professional jobs than are the urban-reared people. Also, their income is lower and they tend less often to see themselves as members of the middle or upper classes. Such findings cannot be attributed simply to the presence of a certain ethnic or racial group; they hold for all samples, irrespective of area of the country or of composition of the samples. There is something about being reared in farm areas which makes a person less likely to compete effectively in urban life than urban-reared people.

THE NONFARM OCCUPATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT PROCESS OF FARM-REARED BOYS

We have already noted that the levels of nonfarm occupational achievement of farm-reared females is less strikingly poor than is that of the males. Besides telling about the boys themselves, an analysis of the process by which farm-reared boys move into various levels of nonfarm occupational structures, will suggest why this is so. It will also give suggestions as to the kinds of people who enter farming. We turn now to that process.

Various studies report different percentages of boys who plan and do not plan to become farmers. Kaldor, et al., found in 1959 that 39 per cent of Iowa farm boys who were seniors in high school planned to enter farming in 1959, while 57 per cent planned to take nonfarm jobs, and 3 per cent were undecided.[6] In Lenawee County Michigan (1957) 38 per cent of the 17 year old farm boys planned to farm, and 62 per cent did not plan to farm.[7] Earlier, using 1948 data on Wisconsin senior boys, it was found that 42 per cent planned to farm and 68 per cent did not.[8] Obviously these percentages vary from area to area and from time to time. Moreover, they are not up-to-date. Still, they seem to tell us that just a few years ago about three or four of every ten farm boys planned to farm. For the 1960's, Manderscheid has estimated that from one in every 10 to one in every 16 farm boys could expect to enter farming; naturally, we do not really know how many boys who want to farm are going to be able to do so, but it seems safe to guess that a half or less will actually find themselves in farming when they are adults.[9]

Farm boys are usually reared in a situation which stresses farming as a way of life and as an occupation. Ordinarily the father and mother were raised on or in close contact with farms. The relatives and neighbors are usually farmers. Probably most farm boys are brought up to expect to become farmers. The farm boy doubtless learns that it is good to work out of doors, take care of animals, breathe fresh air, to do and be all the things that are commonly believed to be part of farming. Besides, those with whom he interacts when he is away from home---the storekeepers, gas station attandants, teachers, and other youngsters in school---tend to think of him and to treat him as a farmer. So it is hardly surprising that many farm boys report that they plan to be farmers. The

fact that needs explanation is that so many of them decide to leave farming.

PLANNING TO FARM.

There are apparently at least three factors which may be plausibly interpreted as inducing some boys to plan to leave farming and others to plan to become farmers. These are (1) the personalities of the boys, (2) the degree to which the parents stress farming or nonfarming occupations for the boys, and (3) the resources available to the boys for entering farming.

The few data on personality correlates of farm residence and of planning to farm which are available are quite consistent with sociological theory, but inconsistent with widely-held myths about the personalities of farm people. One project, in a good agricultural county in the midst of an industrial economy, showed, among other things, that farm boys tended to be lower in measured intelligence, less adventurous, more dependent, more tied to relatives and to the local area, and lower in faith in their own ability to influence events than were nonfarm boys.[10] These findings are of special interest because they show a general pattern of conventionality, dependence upon the judgment of others, and a lower ability and motivation to perform well in nonfarm occupations.

Even more revealing are the findings of this project regarding personality differences between farm boys who plan to farm and farm boys who do not plan to farm. Those who do not plan to farm are more adventurous, more independent, have more control over their behavior, and have greater character stability than those who plan to farm.[11] While this project did not find differences in measured intelligence between the two groups, it has been found in other studies, with those planning to farm having the lower scores.[12] In general, we can conclude that a greater proportion of the boys who plan to leave farming have developed personalities that are more open to new ideas than those who plan to farm. In short, those who plan nonfarm careers are more likely to be "non-conformists;" those who plan to farm typically are more likely to be "conformists."

Studies in Iowa and Michigan also concur in showing that despite the general social support for farming as an occupation for boys, parents of farm boys fairly often urge them to take nonfarm jobs. Generally, those whose parents have higher than average educational and occupational aspirations for them, plan to leave farming.[13]

Finally, the best available evidence shows that when the boy's economic resources for entering farming are high, he will tend to plan to farm; inversely, when his economic resources are low he will tend to plan not to farm.[14] In the above-mentioned Michigan project, it was found that those boys who came from small families were more likely to plan to farm than were others.[15] This is probably a reflection of the relatively low competition among farm boys from small families for the limited resources that are available.

We interpret these findings, as a whole, to mean that a boy will plan to move away from farming if his personality gives him a readiness to break out of

the ways of behavior and thought which are characteristic of farm people, or if his parents want him to take a nonfarm job, or if his economic resources for entering farming are quite low. On the other hand, he will plan to farm if his personality is not such as to lead him to break with the ways of behavior and thought common to farm people, or if his parents do not encourage him to leave farming (or encourage him to be a farmer), or if his economic resources for entering farming are relatively favorable.

But there seems also to be a mediating factor between the personality of the youth and orientations of his parents, on the one hand, and plans regarding farming, on the other hand. Although the exact chain of relations is not clearly known, it is quite clear that boys who plan to farm are strongly influenced by non-monetary values commonly associated with farming. Kaldor et al. for example have shown that many farm boys say they are willing to become farmers even when it would mean a considerable financial loss as compared to a nonfarm job.[16] Some of the non-monetary values preferred more often by those who plan to farm are: out-of-doors work, physical activity, work with machines and tools, work in the local community, contact with people,[17] and a relative disliking for change.[18]

It is our guess that it is primarily value orientations such as these which the non-conformist and the boy with mobility-oriented parents rejects. He tends to accept their opposites, which are believed to be associated with nonfarm occupations. Similarly, we think that the conformist and the boy with non-mobility oriented parents probably incorporate values such as these. On the other hand, there is little reason to suspect that the presence or absence of monetary resources has any appreciable effect on non-monetary value orientations, although the latter variable is correlated with planning to farm. Hence, there is reason to think that monetary resources exert a direct effect on plans regarding farming as an occupation; but that personality and parents' mobility orientations exert their influence on the plan regarding farming indirectly through their effect on accepting or rejecting the values regarding farming, as well as through their effect on the opposite values which are believed to be associated with nonfarm occupations.

THE EFFECTS OF PLANNING TO FARM.

Once formed, the plan regarding farming appears to have important consequences for the rest of the boy's career. Plans to farm greatly influence the process of seeking information about nonfarm occupations, levels of nonfarm occupational aspirations, and post high school educational plans. One reason for these relationships is the widespread belief that education and occupational information are important only for boys who don't plan to farm. (This latter hypothesis was tested in one project. Almost everyone agreed that a boy doesn't have to go to college if he wants to be a farmer.)[19] Evidence for this is quite conclusive. In all studies in which the hypothesis has been tested, boys who plan to farm had much lower levels of educational aspiration than farm-reared boys who planned nonfarm careers.[20] In the one study in which levels of occupational aspiration of nonfarm occupational aspirations were compared for those boys who did and did not plan to farm, the former had the lower aspirations,[21] Finally, those who plan to farm, less actively seek occupational information,[22] spend less of their school

time in non-agricultural courses,[23] and know less about the occupational world,[24] than do boys who do not plan to farm. Thus, it is clear that the plan regarding farming is of great importance. Farm boys who plan to farm usually are insensitive to the objective requirements of today's world of work. Farm boys who do not plan to farm, however, differ only slightly from nonfarm boys in these respects.[25]

The evidence thus overwhelmingly supports the proposition that if a boy decides to farm---a decision which often becomes firm before the 10th grade[26]---he effectively seals himself off from the occupational information which is around him.

But there is another influence on levels of educational and occupational aspiration which we must examine. Sheer geographic isolation evidently has something to do with the occupational achievement process of farm youth. In fact only a few years ago sociologists thought this fact was sufficient to explain the whole phenomenon of low nonfarm achievement levels of farm-reared people.[27] It is certainly true that in isolated regions the quality of rural elementary and high schools is relatively poor. Moreover, youth in such areas do not have the opportunity to have first-hand acquaintance with more than a few occupational roles. Also, they are less subjected to the mass media, and these carry a good deal of information relevant to occupations. Finally, colleges and universities, which introduce a good deal of educational and occupational information into the communities surrounding them, are practically non-existent in isolated farm areas.

Obviously, the environment of the rural young person in an isolated area is less rich in information relevant to the nonfarm world of work than is the environment in less isolated areas and in urban places. Most research on the subject has shown that farm youth, even those who do not plan to farm, tend to have lower educational and occupational aspirations than other rural youth or urban youth.[28] These relationships are most pronounced in samples from regions where industry is not well developed,[29] and they tend to disappear elsewhere.[30]

Evidently, then, there are two factors which work in parallel to form a mental set which later influences the nonfarm occupational success of youth: geographic isolation and plans regarding farming. In combination, these influences apparently operate as follows: (1) Youth who live in relatively isolated areas and who plan to become farmers typically have the lowest average levels of educational and occupational aspiration. They are most limited in access to information and are least likely to perceive available information as relevant to them. The next two groups include boys who plan to farm and who live in less isolated rural areas and farm boys living in more isolated rural areas who don't plan to farm. Some data suggest that plans to farm are related more closely with aspiration levels than is degree of isolation. Therefore, we hypothesize that (2) the more isolated farm youth who don't plan to farm have higher aspiration levels than (3) the less isolated youth who plan to farm. Access to information about education and jobs may favor the less isolated youth, but we argue that those who don't plan to farm are more attentive to available information because their aspiration levels are higher. (4) Finally, youth who do not plan to farm and who

have considerable acquaintship with nonfarm life have the highest levels of educational and occupational aspiration. There is no substantial difference in the levels of aspiration between farm boys in this group and nonfarm boys.

ASPIRATION AND ACHIEVEMENT.

It is difficult to measure the relations between levels of educational and occupational aspiration developed during high school and subsequent levels of educational and occupational achievement (social rank of the person's occupation). The difficulty arises chiefly because aspiration measurements must be secured from youth in school, and then, only after several years have elapsed, may their achievement levels be measured. Even so, there are substantial intercorrelations among these four variables. Level of occupational aspiration is highly and positively correlated with level of educational aspiration, level of educational achievement, and level of occupational achievement.[31] Level of educational aspiration is also positively correlated with level of educational achievement,[32] and level of occupational achievement.[33] Level of educational achievement is positively correlated with level of occupational achievement,[34] as well as with the factors just noted. As a matter of fact, levels of educational and occupational aspiration are better predictors of levels of educational and occupational achievement years later than are any other known variables.[35] It seems safe to say that levels of educational and occupational achievement in adult life are substantially influenced by levels of educational and occupational aspiration in youth.

SUMMARY.

Thus, processes which begin early in life seem to work themselves out in adulthood. Some farm boys learn to want to become farmers and some do not. Those who do, show greater lack of interest in the nonfarm world and as a result, are less likely to develop the knowledge and the kinds of aspirations that will lead them to perform adequately if they do not become farmers. Those who decide not to become farmers tend to develop the knowledge and kinds of aspirations that will aid them in persuing nonfarm careers. Youth who live in isolated areas also may be partially limited in knowledge about the nonfarm world and tend to have somewhat low levels of aspiration, with their consequences for levels of achievement. Still, the more powerful influence is the plan regarding farming; planning to farm drastically reduces levels of educational and occupational aspiration.

FARM GIRLS

Date for analyzing the occupational achievement process of farm-reared girls are more limited than for boys. Still, the most comprehensive study indicates that the urban occupational achievement levels of women who were reared on farms are lower than those who were not reared on farms, but these differences are not as pronounced as among males.[36] The same seems to be true of educational achievement, if one can judge by enrollment in the first year of college.[37] Moreover,

all the available data on farm girls' educational and occupational aspirations indicate that they are either equal to or slightly lower than those of nonfarm girls.[38]

In terms of the frame of reference used previously it appears likely that relative geographical isolation, and its attendant features such as relatively poor schools, few occupations visible to the youth, etc., may well be the main factor producing the chain of somewhat low educational and occupational aspirations, reduced educational achievement, and finally relatively low occupational achievement among farm as compared to nonfarm girls. Because for all practical purposes farming is not open to girls as a career; they do not plan to be farm operators. Thus, their levels of aspiration and achievement are not further depressed by planning to farm, as are those of boys.

BOYS WHO ENTER FARMING

Research cited earlier tells a good deal about boys who plan to farm. In brief, they predominantly include farm boys whose value-orientations, personalities, and education are least well-adapted to success in the nonfarm world. But it does not follow that these characteristics, which are associated with planning to farm, are relevant for being a productive and successful farmer. Given the competitive and managerial nature of modern farming, its demands for careful planning and use of complex machinery, etc., one would expect that, on the whole, the same characteristics are needed in farming today as are needed outside of it. Tomorrow's successful farmers are going to be drawn pretty largely from among those who plan to farm. Among those who plan to farm, will the ones who have the personalities, value-systems, and education best adapted to urban life be the ones who survive in farming? Our guess is that to some extent they will be.

There is also a large group whose decision to enter farming is based heavily on the fact that they or their parents have sufficient financial resources to enable them to enter farming rather easily.[39] Are these going to be largely people whose value-systems, personalities and education make them somewhat incompetent to deal with modern farming? This would seem to be a logical inference. But, because such inferences are based on statistical averages concerning the total group of boys who plan to farm, but do not automatically apply to the subgroup who really become farmers, we cannot be at all certain.

If true, these speculations suggest that the successful farmers of the future will consist of a group of people whose personalities and value orientations are relatively adequate for modern farming, but whose families were not very well off, together with a group whose personalities and value-orientations are less adequate for modern farming but whose families were well-to-do. Moreover, they suggest that those who plan to farm but are unable to compete, and will therefore leave farming, will be those whose personalities, values, aspirations, education and resources are least effective, not only for farming, but also for nonfarm work. However, it should be clearly understood that these speculations go far beyond present research data.

IMPLICATIONS

NEEDED RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS.

The paucity of data for certain critical points on the process of educational and occupational achievement of farm youth tells us that new research is badly needed. The land-grant universities, in connection with other agencies, should carefully study all phases of the process. The schema we have presented may be useful as a basis for hypotheses. Especially serious is the shortage of adequate data on the social psychological factors influencing the occupational achievement process of girls, and on the social psychological factors influencing the relative sucess of youth who become farmers. Longitudinal studies, in which the same individuals are followed up over time, must be conducted on many aspects of the problem. This is expensive, but we should be prepared to bear the costs.

CONCLUSIONS FOR POLICY.

Assuming that the main lines of this argument are valid, there are several conclusions for policy which follow. In general these assume that making a change in any one link in the causal chain, (which, we hypothesize, controls the occupational achievement of youth) will have effects throughout all of the links beyond it. But some links may be more amenable to changes than others.

Specifically, it is possible to change the nonfarm occupational achievement levels of farm-reared people by modifying their personalities and value-orientations, changing the mobility-orientations parents have for the youth, changing the economic resources available to the youth, reducing the effects of geographical isolation, changing plans regarding farming, and raising levels of education and occupational aspirations. We shall treat each of these, though not in this order.

1. General programs aimed at increasing the availability and quality of rural schools, including colleges, will improve the chances for nonfarm occupational success among farm boys and girls. Such programs will reduce the effects of geographic isolation. But the effects of isolation are not very great today, and they will therefore not address themselves to the most important problems. Farm boys who do not plan to farm, and farm girls generally differ only slightly from nonfarm boys and girls.

2. In-school guidance programs might conceivably be designed to raise levels of educational and occupational aspiration directly. Whether this would work is a moot question. These variables, like farm plans, are tied to personality and value characteristics.[40] There has as yet been no experimental research to see what are the consequences, including side-effects, of programs designed to raise these levels of aspiration. At the very least, however, careful experiments on this should be conducted in a limited number of schools. Attention should be given to raising aspirations of unaspiring youngsters of unusual ability.

3. Programs aimed specifically at reducing the effects of planning to farm

are likely to achieve more success in treating the central problem, the low nonfarm occupational aspiration of farm boys who plan to farm. All such programs should stress the facts of the world of work as they really are.

(a) In-school guidance programs might be set up to make these boys less certain that they will be farmers. This should have the desired effect of making them more attentive to the objective requirements of the nonfarm world. Thus, educational and occupational aspirations, and the achievement levels which are partially under their control, could probably be raised. However, if tried, this should be watched carefully because planning to farm is closely tied to other personality and value characteristics, and undesireable side-effects might well occur.

(b) School-based programs designed to work through the parents might be tried. These have been successful with urban working class parents, but of course we do not know if they would work among farm people. In any case, if such attempts are made, they should have the full cooperation of all the groups that work with farm people. These include the colleges of agriculture of the land-grant universities, the farmer's cooperative organizations, etc. Such programs should concentrate on giving parents unbiased, objective information about the realities of entering and being successful in farming, and about the requirements of the nonfarm labor market. They should be based on accurate data. Thus they would indirectly aim to reduce the number of boys who plan unrealistically to enter farming. But it is doubtful that such programs, even if done well, will have much influence on the rural youth of today. Their plans, and the relation of these to their personalities and values, are already formed. But they might work well for the youngsters who will be tomorrow's farm youth.

(c) It is perhaps a tempting idea, to think of programs aimed at affecting the process by directly changing personalities or value orientations of individuals. If they were to be tried, they would mainly attempt to produce the personality pattern we have referred to as the non-conformist. But they are impractical. In the first place, changing personalities is an art, the principles of which are not well known and the consequences of which are often quite different from those that were expected. In the second place, it requires trained personnel who are simply not available.

(d) Certain national economic policies may affect these processes. Programs affecting either the income which farm boys can expect to obtain from farming or the resources they have to put into it will apparently have substantial effects among farm boys. But they may serve to make the problems more serious rather than alleviating them. According to Kaldor, et al., the number of boys offering to farm increases or decreases quite rapidly with an increase or decrease in either income resources or income expectations.[41] This suggests that farm policies that raise farm income are likely to increase substantially the number of boys who plan to farm, even if farms are not available. If this happens, and the hypothesized chain of effects occurs, we should expect as time passes that even more farm boys will have difficulty in their adult occupational life than we see around us at present.

On the other hand, as Kaldor and his associates note, if farm income is reduced, the number of boys planning to farm will be likely to fall even more sharply. This should, over the years, have the effect of reducing the number of boys whose nonfarm careers are adversely affected by planning to farm. Unfortunately, in this regard, the best guess is the average farm income will continue to rise and the number of farms will continue to decrease. So it seems fairly likely that unless appropriate measures are taken along the lines suggested above, (3a and 3b), the average nonfarm occupational performance of farm-reared boys who leave farming may well be even lower than it has been in the past. Naturally there is no reason to expect that this would influence the career patterns of farm-reared girls.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have tried to take the available research literature on educational and occupational choices of farm youth, and glean from it an overview of the process by which their occupational performance is influenced. The result is a plausible set of hypotheses. However, these must be used with caution because some of the data upon which valid generalizations must be based are simply missing. At the least, these hypotheses may serve as a basis for the research which must be done. It is our hope, however, that if used with proper care, they may be of practical value in developing programs which can alleviate, in a humane way, the occupational problems which face rural youth. The world which most of them will face is urbanized and industrialized. And it is becoming more so. Let us hope that they will be prepared for it.

FOOTNOTES

1. Reiss, Albert J. Occupations and Social Status, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe (MacMillan), 1961.

2. Copp, for example, has reported correlations between such factors as professionalism, mental flexibility, and discerning ability and the adoption of rational farm practices. Copp, J. H. "Toward Generalization in Farm Practice Research". Rural Sociology, June, 1958, 23, 106-108. These also are important in technical and managerial nonfarm jobs.

3. Freedman, Ronald, and Deborah Freedman. "Farm-Reared Elements in the Nonfarm Population." Rural Sociology, March, 1956, 21, 50-61.

4. Ibid. Lipset, Seymour M., "Social Mobility and Urbanization". Rural Sociology, Sept.-Dec., 1955, 20, 220-228. Beers, H. W., and C. Heflin. Rural People in the City: A Study of the Socioeconomic Status of 297 Families in Lexington, Kentucky, Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 478, Lexington, Kentucky; Heflin, C. P. and H. W. Beers. Urban Adjustment of Rural Migrants: A Study of 297 Families in Lexington, Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin No. 487; Burchinal, L. G., and P. Jacobson. Migration and Adjustment of Farm and Non-Farm and Adolescents in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Agricultural and Home Economics Experiment Station Research Bulletin #516, June 1963.

5. Freedman and Freedman, op. cit.

6. Kaldor, Donald R., Eber Eldridge, Lee G. Burchinal, and I. W. Arthur. Occupational Plans of Iowa Farm Boys, Ames, Iowa, Iowa State University Agricultural and Home Economics Experiment Station Research Bulletin No. 508, September 1962.

7. Haller, A. O., unpublished data, 1957.

8. Haller, A. O. "The Influence of Planning to Farm on Plans to Attend College". Rural Sociology, June, 1957, 22, 137-141.

9. Manderscheid, Lester V. "Farm Careers for Farm Youth". Michigan Farm Economics, East Lansing, Michigan State University Department of Agricultural Economics and Cooperative Extension Service Publication, May, 1963, No. 244.

10. Haller, A. O., and C. E. Wolff. "Personality Orientations of Farm, Village, and Urban Boys". Rural Sociology, Sept., 1962, 27, 275-293.

11. Haller, A. O. "The Occupational Achievement Process of Farm-Reared Youth in Urban-Industrial Society". Rural Sociology, Sept., 1960, 25, 321-333.

12. Kaldor, D. R., et al., op. cit.; and Haller, A. O. (1957), op. cit.

13. Kaldor, D. R., et al., ibid.; and Haller, A. O. (1960), op. cit.

14. Kaldor, D. R., et. al., ibid.

15. Haller, A. O., (1960), op. cit.

16. Op. cit.

17. Ibid.

18. Haller, A. O. (1960), op. cit.

19. Ibid.

20. Kaldor, D. R., et al., op. cit.; A. O. Haller, (1960), (1957), op. cit.; Burchinal, L. G. "Differences in Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Farm, Small-Town and City Boys". Rural Sociology, June, 1961, 26, 107-121.

21. Haller, A. O. (1960), op. cit.

22. Burchinal, L. G. "Who's Going to Farm?", Iowa Farm Science, April, 1960, 24, 12-15.

23. Haller, A. O. (1960), op. cit.

24. Kaldor, D. R., et. al., op. cit.

25. Burchinal, L. G. (1961), op. cit.; Haller, A. O. (1960), ibid.; Haller, A. O. "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," Rural Sociology, Dec., 1958, 23, 355-362.

26. Kaldor, D. R., et al., op. cit.

27. Lipset, S. M., op. cit.; and Haller, A. O. (1958), op. cit.

28. Cowhig, J., J. W. Artis, J. A. Beegle, and H. Goldsmith. Orientations Toward Occupational and Residence: A Study of High School Seniors in Four Rural Counties of Michigan, East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station Special Bulletin 428, 1960; Middleton, R., and C. M. Grigg. "Rural-Urban Differences in Aspirations". Rural Sociology, Dec., 1959, 24, 347-354; Burchinal, L. G. (1961), op. cit.; Griggs, C. M., and R. Middleton. "Community of Orientation and Occupational Aspirations of Ninth Grade Students". Social Forces, May,

1960, 38, 303-308; Slocum, W. L. Occupation and Educational Plans of High School Seniors from Farm and Non-farm Homes, Pullman, Washington, Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 564, 1960; Sewell, W. H. "Rural-Urban Differences in Educational Aspirations," unpublished paper presented at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association, New York, August, 1960; Taves, M. J. "Mobility Among High School Graduates," St. Paul, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Institute of Agricultural Science Service Publication No. 4281, Sociology of Rural Life No. 3.

29. Middleton, R. and C. M. Grigg, ibid.; Grigg, C. M., and R. Middleton, ibid.; Burchinal, L. G. (1961), ibid.

30. Haller, A. O., and W. H. Sewell. "Farm Residence and Levels of Educational and Occupational Aspiration". American Journal of Sociology, Jan., 1957, 62, 407-411; Haller, A. O. (1958), op. cit.

31. Haller, A. O. and I. W. Miller. The Occupational Aspiration Scale: Theory, Structure, and Correlates, East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan State Agricultural Experiment Station Technical Bulletin 288, 1963. See Chapter IV, pp. 28-55.

32. Nam, Charles B., and James D. Cowhig. Factors Related to College Attendance of Farm and Nonfarm High School Graduates: 1960, U. S. Department of Commerce and U. S. Department of Agriculture Farm Population Series Census - ERS (P 27), No. 32, June 15, 1962; and Haller, A. O., and I. W. Miller, ibid.

33. Haller, A. O., and I. W. Miller, ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid; and Nam, C. B., and J. D. Cowhig, op. cit.

36. Freedman, R., and D. Freedman, op. cit.

37. Nam, C. B., and J. D. Cowhig, op. cit.

38. Haller, A. O., and W. H. Sewell, op. cit.; Middleton, R., and C. M. Grigg, op. cit.; Sewell, W. H., op. cit.

39. Kaldor, D. R., et al., op. cit.

40. Haller, A. O., and I. W. Miller, op. cit.

41. Kaldor, D. R., et al., op. cit.